

<p style="text-align: center;">PA 129 of 2007 Boilerplate Report Section 741</p>
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Section 741 of PA 129 of 2007 states the following:

Sec. 741. The department shall report by March 1, 2008 to the house of representatives and senate appropriations subcommittees on transportation, the house and senate fiscal agencies, and the state budget director on progress made to improve the Ann Arbor and NW Michigan railroad's track infrastructure for the purpose of supporting passenger train speed of 59 miles per hour.

The "Ann Arbor and Northwest Michigan" railroad system extends from Ann Arbor northwesterly to Yuma, Traverse City and Petoskey. With the exception of the portion between Durand and Owosso, the corridor is owned by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). Great Lakes Central Railroad (GLC) provides freight service to shippers on the line under an agreement with MDOT, and hopes to incorporate passenger service in the near future.

While GLC envisions passenger service extending all the way to Traverse City and Petoskey, the initial focus of passenger operations is the segment between Ann Arbor and Howell. A coalition of local government officials and business leaders has been formed (nicknamed "WALLY", for Washtenaw and Livingston Line) to support that effort. The Department has developed rough cost estimates for upgrading that 26.9-mile segment. We have provided that information to the Executive Director of the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS). WATS is coordinating a consultant study designed to obtain a reliable expert recommendation on getting the service up and running as well as to create a plan for its long-term viability. MDOT estimates that the track improvements, new siding construction, active warning device installations and upgrades, and a train control system necessary to achieve passenger train speeds of 59 mph would cost \$23.84 million. Developing five stations (Howell, Chilson, Hamburg, Whitmore Lake and Ann Arbor) is estimated to add another \$2.2 million to the cost.

Meanwhile, the Department has been undertaking a series of track rehabilitation projects farther north on the corridor – between Bannister and Ithaca. These projects, while designed to facilitate freight operations in the area of a new ethanol production facility, would benefit future passenger operations as well. A 6.04-mile long, \$2.82 million project to be constructed in FY2008 is the final piece of track, bridge and crossing work in this effort. In total, \$6.76 million is being invested in this 14.36-mile portion of the corridor. The main focus of the work is to upgrade the rail and improve the overall track condition to a design speed of 40 miles per hour for freight purposes. It would appear that, with minor adjustments to the three crossings within the project limits equipped with active warning devices, these improvements would support 59-mph passenger operations.

*Bureau of Aeronautics and Freight Services
Michigan Department of Transportation
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